

South Dakota National Guard

Public Affairs Office

Phone: 605-737-6721 Email: ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil

Web: <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil>

www.facebook.com/SouthDakotaNationalGuard

www.flickr.com/SouthDakotaNationalGuard

https://twitter.com/SD_Guard



October 11, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

SD Guard continues support to state in wake of winter storm

RAPID CITY, S.D. – South Dakota National Guard members continue to support the state in aftermath of the Oct. 4 winter storm that crippled western South Dakota. Nearly 50 Soldiers and Airmen have been called to state active duty to support local citizens since Oct. 5 and have helped to clear road ways, remove snow and assist electrical cooperative crews with gaining access to locations needing power lines repaired.

More than a dozen other full-time National Guard members have also provided dedicated support to state active-duty personnel in response to the storm. So far, 19 separate missions have been requested of the Guard since operations began. Eight missions are complete and the Guard expects to continue to assist electric companies in power restoration efforts for the next seven to 10 days.

Guard forces and equipment began responding immediately after the blizzard and sent to locations hardest hit in Harding, Meade, Perkins and Pennington counties. Equipped with snow blowers, front-end loaders, bulldozers, heavy expanded mobility tactical trucks and humvees, Guard members were dispatched locally and from across the state to help communities dig out from the record-breaking storm.

“Our Soldiers and Airmen are proud to be able to respond to local emergencies such as this,” said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the SDNG. “Our service in a state active duty status like this is foundational to what the National Guard is all about.”

Across the region, snow totals averaged 30 inches, with some isolated areas recording almost five feet, setting new snowfall records for October in the Black Hills and many western counties. Snow accumulation, along with freezing temperatures and winds gusts up to 70 mph, downed thousands of tree limbs and electrical power lines, blocked roadways and decimated livestock caught in the storm.

Local emergency management officials from multiple counties requested support to the state’s emergency management office and the governor, who declared a state of emergency and activated National Guard forces to assist.

The call for Guard assistance came early Saturday morning and coordination began immediately to bring in personnel and dig out equipment. With roads nearly impassable and no travel advised, several Soldiers trekked on foot several miles to reach the Guard headquarters on Camp Rapid in Rapid City to set up operations. Soldiers also trudged through deep snow in the towns of Belle Fourche and Sturgis to begin opening equipment yards. From across the state, Guard personnel from units in Aberdeen, Mobridge, Sioux Falls and Yankton were dispatched to deliver equipment and to help respond to recovery efforts.

According to local electrical companies, more than 38,000 customers suffered power losses throughout the storm and reported more than 3,800 downed power poles. While snow removal missions are complete,

the Guard continues to support power crews who are working from house to house to restore electricity in rural areas; working alongside them pulling electrical bucket trucks out of the snow and mud after they work on a utility pole.

Guard units providing state active duty personnel to the storm recovery efforts include Alpha and Bravo Batteries of the 1-147th Field Artillery Battalion, 109th Regional Support Group, 842nd Engineer Company, 200th Engineer Company, 155th Engineer Company, Joint Force Headquarters and the 114th Fighter Wing.

-30-

High resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/southdakotationalguard



131009-Z-TL267-001: A South Dakota National Guard front-end loader from the 842nd Engineer Company pulls a West River Electric Association truck from the mud and snow along a rural road after repairing an electrical pole near Union Center, S.D., Oct. 9, 2013. About 50 South Dakota National Guard members were called to state active duty to support local citizens during the aftermath of an Oct. 4 winter storm that crippled western South Dakota and left tens of thousands without electricity. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Maj. Anthony Deiss/Released)



131009-Z-TL267-002: A South Dakota National Guard front-end loader from the 842nd Engineer Company waits to assist an electrical crew repairing a utility pole and to pull them from the mud and snow along a rural road near Union Center, S.D., Oct. 9, 2013. About 50 South Dakota National Guard members were called to state active duty to support local citizens during the aftermath of an Oct. 4 winter storm that crippled western South Dakota and left tens of thousands without electricity. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Maj. Anthony Deiss/Released)



131010-Z-TL267-001: South Dakota National Guard Soldiers assist an electrical crew with setting a utility pole along a rural road near Faith, S.D., Oct. 10, 2013, to help restore power to local residents. About 50 South Dakota National Guard members were called to state active duty to support local citizens during the aftermath of an Oct. 4 winter storm that crippled western South Dakota and left tens of thousands without electricity. (U.S. Army National Guard courtesy photo/Released)



131009-Z-TL267-003: Sgt. Samuel Sorcic, of the South Dakota National Guard's 842nd Engineer Company, dismounts his front-end loader after pulling an electrical crew from the mud and snow after repairing a utility pole along a rural road near Union Center, S.D., Oct. 9, 2013. About 50 South Dakota National Guard members were called to state active duty to support local citizens during the aftermath of an Oct. 4 winter storm that crippled western South Dakota and left tens of thousands without electricity. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Maj. Anthony Deiss/Released)



131009-Z-TL267-004: Spc. Robert Bearsheart, of the South Dakota National Guard's 842nd Engineer Company, waits to assist an electrical crew repairing a utility pole along a rural road after near Union Center, S.D., Oct. 9, 2013. About 50 South Dakota National Guard members were called to state active duty to support local citizens during the aftermath of an Oct. 4 winter storm that crippled western South Dakota and left tens of thousands without electricity. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Maj. Anthony Deiss/Released)

FOR MORE INFORMATION contact Maj. Anthony Deiss at (605) 737-6721 or cell (605) 431-8753,
or e-mail ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil